



NEWS RELEASE

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GOVERNOR BREDESEN, COMMISSIONER KISBER TO LEAD CHINA TRADE MISSION

Tennessee to Build on Success in Healthcare, Investment

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen and Economic and Community Development Commissioner Matt Kisber today announced plans to attend the 2009 SEUS/Japan Annual Meeting in Tokyo October 17-19, followed by a nine day trade mission to China. During his trip, Governor Bredesen will meet with Japanese companies currently invested in Tennessee and will hold talks in the Chinese cities of Beijing, Xian, Hangzhou and Hong Kong. The visit comes following action by the Tennessee General Assembly to approve House Joint Resolution 191 calling for closer economic, educational and cultural ties between Tennessee and Hubei province, home to the famous Three Gorges Dam and provincial capital, Hangzhou.

“Last year, we launched a very successful beginning to the economic and cultural relationship between China and Tennessee by opening the Tennessee-China Development Center in Beijing,” said Governor Bredesen. “Despite the global economic slowdown, Tennessee’s trade relationship with China continues to grow and we see real potential for that trade relationship to increase its momentum.”

In 2008, Chinese customers purchased \$1.3 billion dollars worth of goods and services from Tennessee companies, making China the state’s third largest trading partner behind Canada and Mexico. Japan is Tennessee’s fourth largest trading partner, purchasing \$1.07 billion dollars in Tennessee goods and services.

“We continue to have strong interest in Tennessee from China,” said Commissioner Kisber. “As the Chinese economy, especially its consumer markets, continues to expand, we want Tennessee companies to benefit and our mission is designed to raise awareness of Tennessee products.”

One of China’s primary interests is Tennessee’s expertise in the delivery of health care and in health-related products and training. In October 2008, Commissioner Kisber signed a memorandum of understanding along with Dr. Zhu Baoduo of the Chinese Foreign Loan Office to establish regular exchanges of health care professionals focused on discussing ideas around rural health care delivery. The inaugural China-Tennessee Rural Health Exchange began in May 2008 when 43 Chinese health experts visited the University of Memphis, East Tennessee State University and the Vanderbilt Institute for Better Health.

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Japan-China trade mission
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On June 8, 2009, experts from the three Tennessee universities travelled to Xian to participate in a conference on rural health with more than 100 Chinese medical professionals as a follow-up to last year's exchange. The exchange is funded through a grant from the World Bank and the British Department for International Development.

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development has begun accepting applications for participation in the trade mission. The Japanese portion of the trade mission will be October 18 and 19 in Tokyo and is being managed by the Japan-America Society of Tennessee and the Chinese portion of the trade mission will run October 21 through October 29 and is being managed by ECD. The mission delegation is expected to be limited to approximately 40-50 participants with a participation fee of \$5,000 per delegate (\$1,500 for spouses). That fee includes participation in all trade mission events and domestic flights, but does not include international travel and hotels. Representatives of companies and communities interested in participating in the trade mission can learn more and apply online at www.tnecd.gov

Questions about the trade mission can be sent to chinatrademission09@tn.gov

About the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development

The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development's mission is to create higher skilled, better paying jobs for all Tennesseans. The department seeks to attract new corporate investment in Tennessee and works with Tennessee companies to facilitate expansion and economic growth. To find out more, go to www.tnecd.gov.

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